

International Praxis Conference on Cultural Memory and Coexistence

18–20 March 2011,
Fatih University, Istanbul

Praxis Club was founded in 2006 as an initiative of the Department of Sociology of Fatih University, which aims to adopt an active role in fostering sociological knowledge and imagination in Turkey with a commitment to inter-disciplinary and cross-cultural research.

In addition to fieldworks conducted by the members of Praxis, with particular focus on Central Asia besides Turkey, Praxis has hosted a series of conferences since 2006. Since then, Praxis has also brought together an interdisciplinary group of scholars and policy-makers in its National Sociology Congresses, the third of which was organized in May 2010. With the 1st International Praxis Conference on Cultural Memory and Coexistence that is to be organized after the three nationwide conferences, it is aimed to improve inter-disciplinary and cross-cultural researches on cultural memory, with particular focus on the potential of developing common meanings and understandings.

Call for Papers

Literature on cultural memory has extensively developed in the last two decades. Several scholarly works and conferences have been dedicated to it. The 'new wars' (M. Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*), as well as the current global paradigms drawing on the language of clash have particularly reflected a strong link between cultural memory and conflict. In opposition to the conventional thinking, this conference aims to raise the fundamental question of how individual and collective memories (M. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*) can generate intercultural dialogue practices and therefore used as tools for conflict resolution. We especially aim to generate research on how to develop shared meanings and common understanding at the level of ordinary people belonging to different cultural and ethno-religious communities, therefore reproduce everyday cosmopolitanism. Some of the fundamental questions that will be addressed in the conference are:

1. How is cosmopolitanism experienced in everyday life and urban spaces by members of different social groups?
2. Which are the ways in which memories of conflict and collaboration are transmitted?
3. In what ways coexistence is represented in members' and their communities' symbolic domains?
4. Which are the instruments and roles played in these transmission processes? (first-hand memoirs and narratives; historiography and historians; spatial designs and architects; novels; cinema etc.)
5. What are the ways of the construction and reconstruction of gendered memories?
6. How the sites of memory, i.e. visual history and museums, and imaginary topographies function to shape the discourses of conflict vis-à-vis experiences of coexistence and collaboration?

7. What kinds of interactions or tensions are experienced between public and private memories?
8. How do remembering and forgetting/amnesia function in justifying the present and constructing the the future?
9. How can the past be dealt through examples of the good?
10. How can narratives and oral heritage be developed as a tool for understanding and overcoming conflictual issues?
11. How can the constructive experiences be adopted as shared models for the (re)building of coexistence and inter-communal trust?
12. What can be the impacts of local experiences on identity-formation at the regional and global level?

We welcome proposals from senior as well as junior researchers from all disciplines concerned with these debates and issues including Anthropology, Architecture, Art History, World Literature, Fine Art, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology and Theology. The main objective of the conference is to generate research and understanding of how individual and cultural memories could facilitate a shared meaning and common understanding vis-IO-vis the discourses of clash, i.e. civilizations, religions, and ethnic groups.

In addition to the thematic panels, the conference will host photography exhibitions and book panels as well as film presentations on cultural memory.

300-word paper abstracts with a 200-word bio should be sent by 1 October 2010 to Ali Murat Yel (e-mail: muratyel@gmail.com) and Onder Cetin (e-mail: o.cetin.isim@gmail.com). Selection of the papers will be made on the basis of quality and relevance to the conference themes. Selected papers will be published in a special volume in English and in Turkish.

Deadlines:

- Submission of abstracts: 1 October 2010
- Notification of acceptance of abstracts: 1 November 2010
- Submission of full papers: 1 January 2011